



Report to the Auburn City Council

Action Item

Agenda Item No. 7

City Manager's Approval

To: Mayor and City Council Members
From: Wilfred Wong, Community Development Director
Date: September 26, 2011
Subject: Parking Management Old Town and Downtown

The Issue

Should the City Council direct staff to continue making parking operational changes and discuss with the Downtown and Old Town Business Associations additional operational changes described in the staff report?

Conclusions and Recommendations

Staff recommends that the City Council take the following actions:

- A. By Motion, direct staff to complete as soon as possible additional directional signage to public parking lots 1 Lincoln Way, lot 3 Cherry/Tennis, lot 8 Law Library and lot 9 Jury Lot (see Exhibit A for locations).
- B. By Motion, direct staff to again cease parking enforcement during the holiday season. Staff will coordinate with the Downtown and Old Town Business Associations on the dates and locations.
- C. By Motion, direct staff to discuss with the Downtown and Old Town Business Associations the parking report and develop changes in parking operations for implementation in the spring.

Background

In March 30, 2009, Walker Parking Consultants completed a study of parking conditions in Old Town and Downtown Auburn. Since the 2009 study the following has occurred (see Exhibit A for parking lot locations):

- 1. Parking lot 9 Jury Lot located at Auburn Folsom Road/Lincoln Way was improved, the number of parking spaces was increased from 60 to 85 spaces and additional directional signage was installed.
- 2. Reserved parking spaces in the public parking lots have been decreased from 61 to 17 spaces. This has allowed for 44 spaces to become available to the public.

3. Phase 1 of Streetscape has been completed in Central Square (Downtown), which caused a loss of 11 on-street spaces.
4. Starting in 2010 parking enforcement was improved to be more consistent.
5. The School Park Preserve project was completed, which allowed for the public parking lot on College Way to become available. This parking lot can accommodate 19 spaces.
6. In Old Town new directional signal installed for public parking lot 7 Park Street (Yue lot).

During December 2010 and January 2011, new parking counts were conducted by the Community Development Department. Counts were completed on seven different dates and for several different time periods. The total number of parking counts taken was twenty-three for on-street spaces and nineteen for the public parking lots. Following were the dates and times that parking counts were taken:

1. December 14, 2010, Tuesday
 - 11:30 AM on-street and public lots
 - 12:30 PM public lots
 - 3:30 PM on-street and public lots
2. December 16, 2010, Thursday
 - 11:30 AM on-street and public lots
 - 12:30 PM public lots
 - 3:30 PM on-street and public lots
 - 6:30 PM on-street
3. December 17, 2010, Friday
 - 11:30 AM on-street and public lots
 - 12:30 PM public lots
 - 3:30 PM public lots
 - 4:45 PM on-street
4. January 18, 2011, Tuesday
 - 11:30 AM on-street and public lots
 - 12:30 PM public lots
 - 3:30 PM on-street and public lots
 - 6:30 PM on-street and public lots
5. January 20, 2011, Thursday
 - 11:30 AM on-street and public lots
 - 12:30 PM public lots
 - 3:30 PM on-street and public lots
 - 6:30 PM on-street and public lots
6. January 21, 2011, Friday
 - 11:30 AM on-street and public lots
 - 12:30 PM public lots
 - 3:30 PM on-street
 - 4:30 PM public lots
 - 4:45 PM on-street
7. January 22, 2011 Saturday
 - 11:30 AM on-street and public lots

- 12:30 PM public lots
- 3:30 PM on-street and public lots
- 6:30 PM on-street and public lots

For on-street parking count purposes the Old Town and Downtown business districts were divided into seven areas, then blocks and finally street segments. By doing so we are able to identify parking occupancy by each street segment. For example, we have parking counts for High Street between Elm/Center, Center/Reamer, Reamer/Walsh and so forth.

There are eleven public parking lots within the Old Town and Downtown business districts (Exhibit A).

Analysis Parking Supply

Per Walker Parking Consultants on-street parking would be considered impacted if the demand were 85% or more of the available spaces. For off-street parking in the public lots parking would be considered impacted if the demand were 90% or more of the available spaces.

Old Town & Downtown Business Districts

The Old Town and Downtown business districts contain a total of approximately 1,695 on-street (1226) and public lot (469) parking spaces. District wide on-street parking occupancy ranged from 29% to 50%. District wide public parking lots occupancy ranged from 25% to 64%. Using the worst occupancy rate for both on-street parking (50%) and public lots (64%), there would be an occupancy district wide of 54%, or 915 spaces were occupied leaving 780 available parking spaces.

The most intense use for both on-street parking and public parking lots occur during lunch time (11:30 AM-12:30 PM). During this time there was an average occupancy of 46% district wide for on-street parking and an average occupancy of 52% district wide for public parking lots. Note these averages include the January 22, 2011, Saturday count when the Farmers' Market took place.

During the other times of the day parking occupancy for on-street parking was generally the same with an average occupancy range of 33%-36%. The same can be said for occupancy for public lots with an average occupancy range of 35%-40%.

Downtown

During the twenty-three on-street parking counts, Lincoln Way between Cleveland/High and Lincoln Way between Cherry/Hillmont experienced the most consistent parking occupancy of 85% or greater (Exhibit B). This area contains approximately 54 parking spaces. A variety of other street segments had an 85% or greater occupancy, but this occurred infrequently (1 to 4 times out of 23 counts) and they did not occur at the same time of the day. For example, when High Street between East Placer/Lincoln was full the adjoining streets were not.

During the nineteen public parking lot counts the following three lots experienced some parking occupancy of 90% or greater:

- Lot #2, High Street
 1. January 18, 2011, Tuesday, 11:30 AM
 2. January 21, 2011, Friday, 11:30 AM
- Lot #5, E. Placer
 1. January 18, 2011, Tuesday, 6:30 PM
 2. January 20, 2011, Thursday, 6:30 PM
- Lot #6, Lincoln Way/Elder Station
 1. December 16, 2010, Thursday, 12:30 PM

Staff does not believe there is a need to make any adjustments to these public parking lots since the peak use times for each of these lots do not match. There are six public lots within the Downtown District, which means five other public lots had available parking spaces during these times. Also, the segments of Lincoln Way experiencing occupancy greater than 85% have three other public lots (1, 3, and 4) within close proximity that did not reach 90% occupancy.

Old Town

During the twenty-three on-street parking counts, the following streets/areas experienced the most consistent parking occupancy of 85% or greater (Exhibit C):

- Court Street
- Lincoln Way between Court/Maple
- Washington Street between Park/Sacramento
- Sacramento Street between Washington/Brewery
- Historic Fire Station
- Historic Post Office

The streets/areas above contain approximately 59 parking spaces. This is the core of Old Town with very intense uses (restaurants and bars). Also, the topography, which drops into Old Town, dramatically draws one to the center of this business district.

During the nineteen public parking lot counts parking lot 7 Park Street (Yue lot) consistently experienced a parking occupancy of 90% or greater.

Not including the January 22, 2011, Saturday, Farmers' Market count, parking lot 8 Law Library did have three counts of greater than 90%, but two occurred in December during lunch time and one at 6:30 PM on Saturday. The lunch time count of 90% or greater did not occur again in January.

Both Parking lots 8 Law Library (45 spaces) and lot 9 Jury Lot (85 spaces) have available parking spaces. At peak times lot 8 Law Library is 70%-80% occupied. Except during Farmers' Market, lot 9 Jury Lot is 30%-40% occupied. One count of 64% did occur for lot 9 Jury Lot.

Non-Patron Parking

To test whether there was some employee parking occurring in a congested area, the 2009 Walker Parking study conducted a license plate inventory along Lincoln Way (High to Harrison) in Downtown. The study concluded that approximately 10% of the on-street parking spaces (10 out of 98) along Lincoln Way in Downtown were being occupied by merchants or employees. Stated in the report:

In many cities congestion occurs around the core shopping streets while parking nearby remains at lower utilization rates. Frequently part of the congestion is caused by employees parking close to their business. Customer and visitor parking should be the priority in Auburn to ensure vitality and hospitality in both Downtown and Old Town areas. However, it is reported that employees are taking many of the more desirable and convenient parking spaces.

Staff conducted a license plate inventory for the on-street parking areas with occupancies of greater than 85% in Downtown (Exhibit B, approximately 54 spaces) and Old Town (Exhibit C, approximately 59 spaces). In Downtown inventories were done on Tuesday/May 31, Wednesday/June 22, and Thursday/June 23. In Old Town inventories were done on Thursday/May 26, Tuesday/May 31, Wednesday/June 22, and Thursday/June 23. Staff believes merchants and employees are parking in these congested areas in numbers that significantly impact the availability of parking in these core commercial streets. At times staff estimates that approximately 15% to 25% of the spaces are being used by non-patrons.

Compelling merchants and employees to park outside of the core commercial areas may be difficult to sustain in the long term without the strong support of the businesses.

Recommendations**Downtown**

Lincoln Way between Cleveland/High and Lincoln Way between Cherry/Hillmont requires operational changes to increase the turnover of parking spaces and encourage people to park outside the core area. Note a recommendation from the 2009 Walker Parking study was to reduce time limits from three hours to two hours. If the desire is to hold off doing this then the following can be implemented first:

1. Increase and focus parking enforcement in the subject area. Less enforcement will occur in the outlying areas.
2. Have the Downtown Business Association encourage merchants and employees to park outside the core area. This will need to be a consistent and constant message to be sustainable for the long term.
3. Provide additional directional signage to public lot 1 Lincoln Way and lot 3 Cherry/Tennis (see Exhibit A for locations).

If these measures do not bring down the occupancy of the parking spaces to below 85%, two hour parking should be phased in starting with Lincoln Way (Exhibit B). Staff will need to

review signage locations with Public Works and parking enforcement operations with Police to determine the final street segments of Lincoln Way that will be changed. Staff recommends phasing since it will allow for an incremental change from three hour to two hour and it will keep in place the abundance of three hour parking (on-street and public lots) surrounding Lincoln Way. Note that parking lot 1 Lincoln Way, lot 3 Cherry/Tennis and lot 5 East Placer have a total of 101 eight hour parking spaces. Also, parking lot 6 Elder Station has 49 spaces with no time limit.

Staff considered designating “merchant/employee only” parking in the public parking lots, but believes it is not necessary in Downtown and doing so could cause other problems. First, the congested area is relatively small and there is adequate parking surrounding this section of Lincoln Way. Implementing and enforcing a merchant/employee parking program would require city resources that would take away from other city priorities. Finally, if merchants/employees do not use the parking less parking would be available to the public.

Old Town

Some of the unique characteristics of Old Town also make it more challenging to manage parking. Old Town is a compact business district with very intense uses (restaurants and bars). The downhill topography not only draws one to the center of the district, but also encourages one to park where the action is versus the outlying area. Interstate 80 provides freeway access, but removed the ability to have a larger business district with more street parking.

Old Town requires operational changes to increase the turnover of parking spaces and encourage people to park outside the core area. As mentioned above a recommendation from the 2009 Walker Parking study was to reduce time limits from three hours to two hours. If the desire is to hold off doing this then the following can be implemented first:

1. Increase and focus parking enforcement in the subject area. Less enforcement will occur in the outlying areas.
2. Look into the possibility of extending parking enforcement into the evenings for Thursday, Friday and Saturday.
3. Have the Old Town Business Association encourage merchants and employees to park outside the core area. This will need to be a consistent and constant message to be sustainable for the long term.
4. Change approximately 20 parking spaces in lot 9 Jury Lot from 3 hour to 8 hour. The 43 parking spaces in parking lot 7 Park Street (Yue lot) will remain 8 hour.
5. Discuss with the Old Town Business Association the possibility of “merchant/employee only” parking in lot 8 Law Library and lot 9 Jury Lot.
6. Provide additional directional signage to public lots 8 Law Library and 9 Jury Lot (see Exhibit A for locations).

The number of parking spaces that a merchant or employee can park (8 hour and no time limit) for an extended amount of time is limited in the Old Town area. Staff believes designating “merchant/employee only” could be beneficial if supported by the Old Town businesses.

If these measures do not bring down the occupancy of the on-street parking spaces to below 85%, two hour parking should be phased in starting with the street segments identified in Exhibit D. If there's a desire to split this into two sub-phases staff suggests the following:

- Historic Fire Station/Historic Post Office areas, Washington Street/Sacramento Street between Park/Brewery and Lincoln Way between Maple/Court (Exhibit E). This has approximately 47 parking spaces.
- Historic Fire Station/Historic Post Office areas, east side of Sacramento Street and Lincoln Way between Maple/Court (Exhibit F). This has approximately 62 parking spaces.

Staff will need to review signage locations with Public Works and parking enforcement operations with Police to determine the final street segments that will be changed.

Alternatives Available; Implications of Alternatives

1. Take no action. No change to existing parking operations.
2. Direct staff to complete additional parking counts. Staff will bring this item back to the City Council for consideration with additional information.
3. Provide further direction to staff.

Fiscal Impact

Additional directional parking lot signage will be funded out of the existing Public Works budget.

Additional Information

Please see the following Exhibits for more details:

- A. Location of public parking lots.
- B. Downtown locations with most consistent parking occupancy of 85% or greater and proposed locations for two hour parking in Downtown.
- C. Old Town locations with most consistent parking occupancy of 85% or greater.
- D. Proposed locations for two hour parking in Old Town.
- E. Proposed sub-phase for two hour parking in Old Town.
- F. Proposed sub-phase for two hour parking in Old Town.

EXHIBIT A

1 OF 2

CITY OF AUBURN - PUBLIC PARKING LOTS

DOWNTOWN AREA



EXHIBIT A

2 OF 2

CITY OF AUBURN - PUBLIC PARKING LOTS OLD TOWN AREA

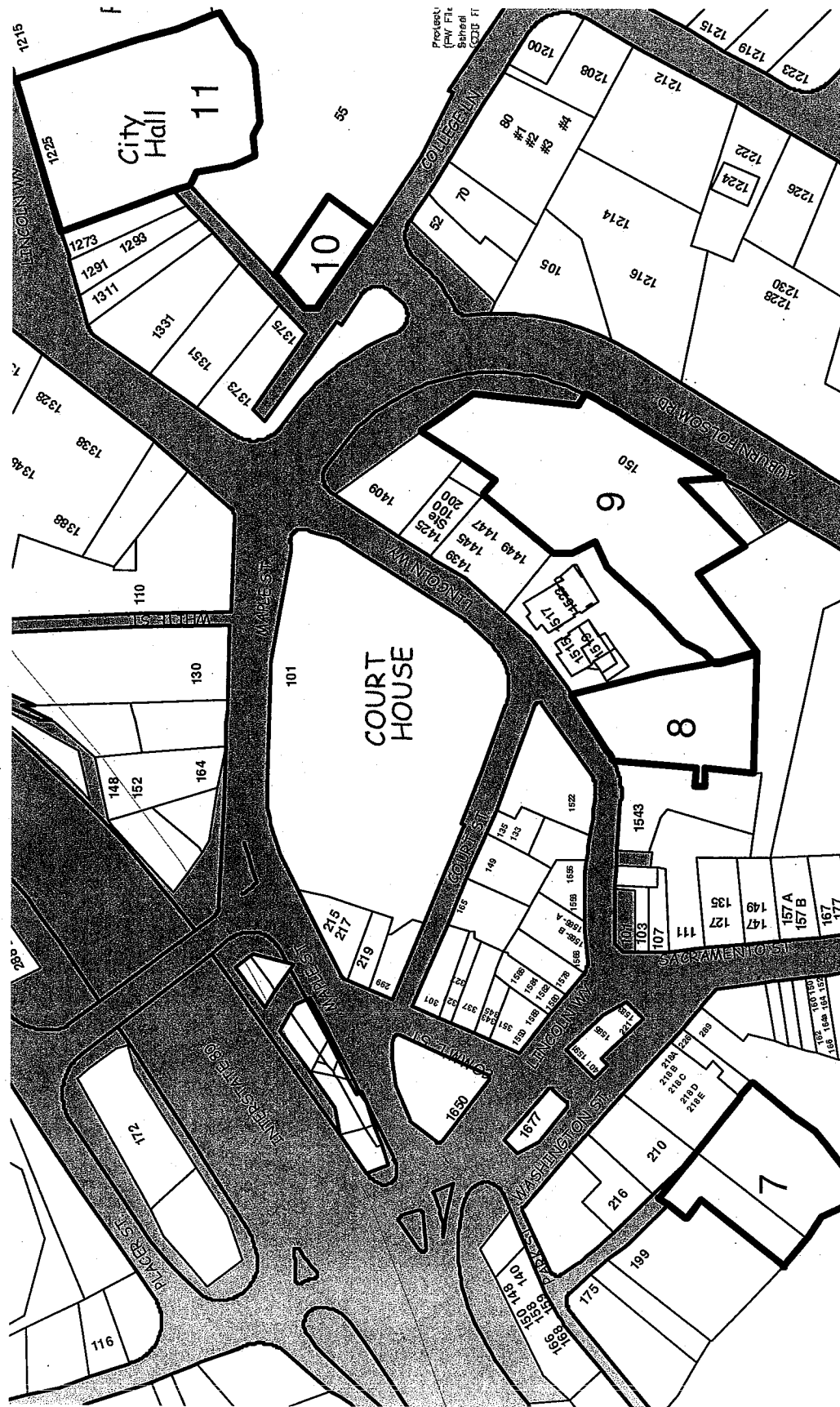


EXHIBIT B



EXHIBIT C

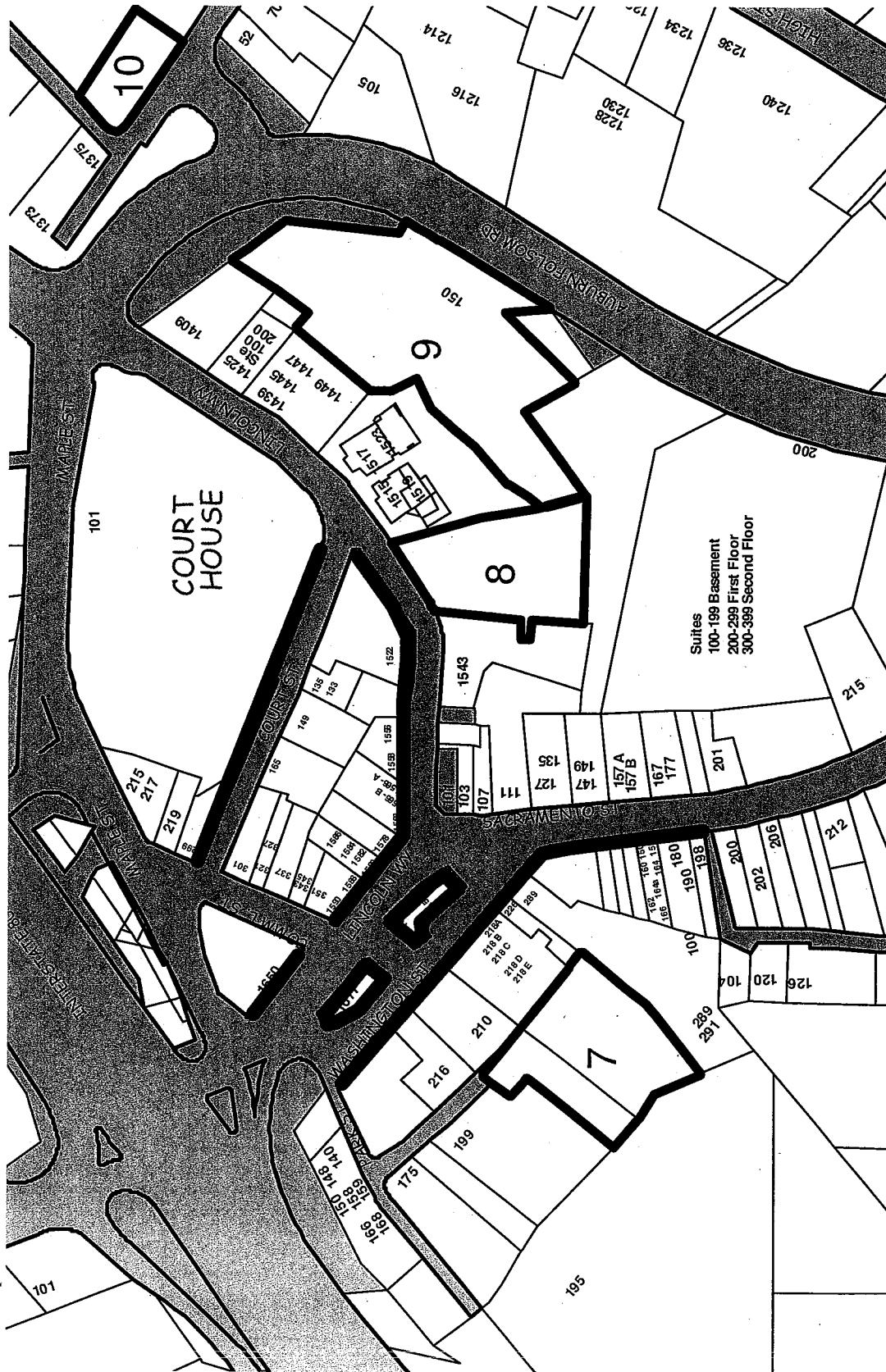
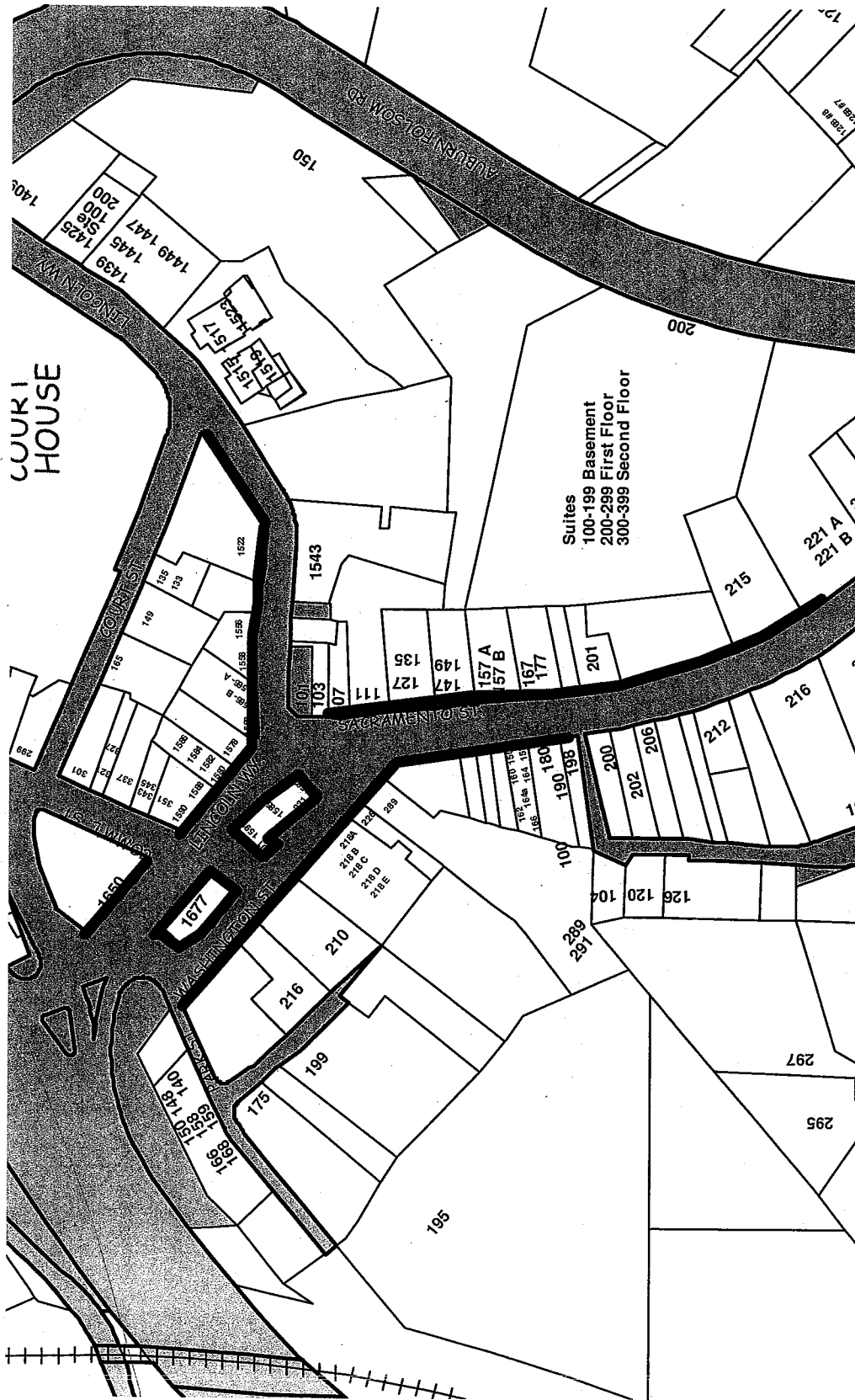


EXHIBIT D



A detailed street map of a residential area in Sacramento, California. The map shows a grid of streets including Auburn Folsom Rd, Lincolnway, Courtyard, Washington St, and Sacramento St. Numerous house numbers are labeled on the lots. A large area is labeled 'Suites 100-199 Basement, 200-299 First Floor, 300-399 Second Floor'. The map is oriented with North at the top.

[illegible]